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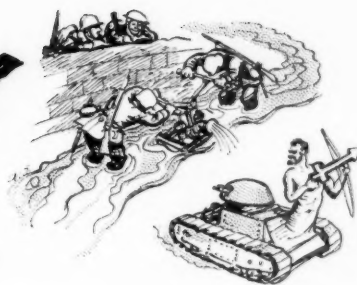
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# PUNCH

OR  
THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CXCVII No. 5147

November 22 1939

## Charivaria

"SOON after Christmas," declares a prophet, "you will find Herr HITLER laying his cards on the table." That is if anybody has sent him any.

A German propagandist says there has always been a certain amount of ill-feeling between France and England. Good sailors have never noticed it.



Dr. GOEBBELS explains in a wireless talk that he was never fond of theatricals. So that's why he has never been made Queen of the May.

A new feminine hat fashion shows all the hair. The bowler-hat for men often does the same.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN has been accused by the Germans of the abortive attempt upon HITLER's life at Munich. It is feared at the Admiralty that Mr. CHURCHILL is losing his popularity.

Many actresses have recently taken jobs in canteens serving the B.E.F. They will provide Tease and Refreshments.

### The Chant Topical

"E. (3 o'clock): Psalms 132, 133, 134. Ireland in F. 'What are these that glow from afar.'"  
*Evensong Notice.*

It is claimed of a new type of hammer with a solid rubber head that it can be used with absolute silence. Always providing of course that you miss your thumb.



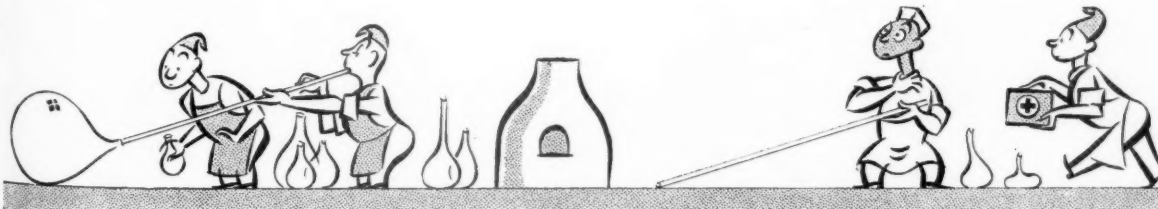
"Petrol—Control prices:—Poor spirit, 1s. 5½d. per gallon, in bulk; and 1s. 8d. per gallon, in cans and steel barrels."  
*Scottish Paper.*

If you want it at all.

If what we hear is true, HITLER is determined to get the war over by next September in order to play the lead in a brand new crisis devised and written by GOEBBELS.

The Berlin *Angriff* points out that Herr HITLER has established good relations with Russia and Italy. He is also making some progress with other Nazi leaders.

A correspondent in a contemporary says he once worked in an American glass-blowing factory but was discharged for doing the opposite to what he was told. Sucker!



## Strategy

"NOW if I were Chief of the German Army Command——" began Bunderby.  
"I can imagine no more popular appointment," I said.

It appears that if Bunderby was Chief of the German Army Command he would relinquish his vain dream of battering his way through the Maginot Line or turning its difficult flanks by a massed detour, and merely leaving a few handfuls of picked men ("like faded flowers," I reflected wistfully) to occupy his Siegfried Line, or Western Wall, he would execute a sudden *volte face* and "spring violently" (so he phrased it) "at the throat of the Red Enemy."

"Meaning Russia?" I asked.

"Meaning the U.S.S.R."

I said I thought that would be very nice indeed.

"It would have this great advantage," resumed Bunderby, "that whilst increasing the benevolent neutrality of Italy, and even perhaps gaining the goodwill of the more or less hostile Turk, I should recover my lost prestige in the Baltic which, after all, is my own salt-water preserve——"

"It's a funny thing about the Baltic," I interrupted, "but it's not really very salt."

"How do you know that?" he asked suspiciously.

"Because I put my hand into it out of a boat near a little Swedish island, and then I licked my hand, and it wasn't much more than brackish."

"Has that got anything whatsoever to do with what I was saying?"

"Nothing at all," I agreed.

He went on to point out that there was no fortified line on the Eastern Front and therefore by throwing himself, man and gun, tank and aeroplane, at the Red Enemy he would leave the Allied armies to be passive spectators of the combat and cheer up their friends at home with concert parties whilst he penetrated, with a violent thrust, into the heart of the Ukraine, "the whole of which," he said, "I understand to be one colossal granary."

"Now there I disagree with you, Bunderby," I said, "because, according to my observation, it takes acres and acres of large fields to make even a semi-colossal granary, and when you have flung yourself off my sofa into the Ukraine and trudged through all those wet fields you will probably find that the *moujiks* have carried away all the grains and ground them up and eaten them, and set the granary on fire before you get to it."

I told him that I began to think of him as rather a forlorn pathetic figure, like someone in a book by H. G. Wells, walking, stout and spectacled, with a wheel-barrow, through all those Ukrainian fields trying to get a lot of grains which weren't really there; and I asked him whether, instead of springing at the Red Enemy, it wouldn't really be safer and simpler for him to take Hungary by the neck and throw it at Roumania, or seize Yugo-Slavia round the waist and hurl it at Italy, or even to spring back to his Western Wall again and wantonly violate the neutrality of Holland, and so obtain bases in the Low Countries "which would enable you," I said, "to make one of your merciless assaults on England by air and sea."

"If I did that," said Bunderby after a few moment's deep thought, "I should in all probability accompany my U-boat offensive with my locust campaign."

So I said how did he mean his locust campaign, and he explained that the idea was to drop locusts in glass bottles all over Great Britain, so that they might eat our growing

food supplies, and when I asked what would happen if he dropped the locusts in (say) Wolverhampton, because they wouldn't know where to find any growing food supplies, being strangers in those parts, and they would probably die in dreadful agony owing to the climate before they found any food, he told me that locusts eat everything eatable or uneatable, they would even eat tram-lines or the staff of the Ministry of Information or Army Forms, and would be utterly immune from smoke and fog, especially as he would most certainly have had them acclimatised to Western conditions before their journey began; but I then remembered another thing about locusts, which was that they are themselves quite good to eat, being the favourite food of the Parthians, according to the historian Herodotus, and also considered a great delicacy by some of the North American Indians.

"So that in all probability," I said, "you would not be starving Great Britain with your bottled locusts, but merely making a most welcome addition to our already abundant food supplies. In a very short time the air-wardens would be told to collect these locusts in their satchels and baskets and bring them to a locust-collecting station. After that they would be rationed along with bacon and butter; people would spread jam on them, and the only complaint would be that some districts were getting bigger and fatter locusts than others, on account of red tape and ministerial muddle and the extraordinary incompetence displayed by the minions of Bumbledom in the National Locust Pool. So, if you were Chief of the German Army Command you would have to begin all over again."

THIS took a great deal of the heart out of Bunderby, and looking at the man I doubted whether he had the energy or the initiative to carry out any of these vast designs: the obvious though unadmitted failure of his locust offensive lowered him in my estimation as a military genius, and I was inclined to wish that I had allowed him after all to fling himself bodily into the Ukraine and perish there, man, tank, aeroplane, and gun. It is not given to everybody to be an Attila or a Jenghiz Khan.

"And there's another thing," I said suddenly. "Suppose Herr Hitler refused to allow you to spring at the throat of the Red Enemy or adopt your locust offensive—what would you do about that?"

"If Hitler interfered with me," said Bunderby, "and I were Chief of the German Army Command, I should tell him to go and fry his head in vegetable butter."

I assured him again that whatever happened I hoped he would get the job.

EVOE.

## Charms and the Man

A DASHING young fellow called Jas.  
Had a room full of females in frás.  
His ugly friend Chas.  
Would regard them with snas.  
And call them *unprintable nas*.

"... stony soils, sandy soils and clay soils contain high amounts of stones, sand and clay respectively."

Ministry of Agriculture in "Food from the Garden."

Who'd have thought it?



### THE HAND OF PROVIDENCE

"If that doesn't make him more popular, his next escape must be narrower still."



*"Come along then, Gertrude. If you want to cross the road we'd better join the convoy."*

## Letters from a Gunner

XVII

**M**Y DEAR MOTHER,—I have rather hazy recollections of sundry disputes you have had with females who were taken on in the capacity of cooks. I may say that I have now very much more sympathy with you than ever before. I too have been having difficulty with a cook. True, he was not taken on as a cook. On looking at his records I find that Gunner Murdoch is described as Bicycle Assembler, and I suppose that trade, fascinating as it must be, is not necessarily a good training ground for cooks.

On the other hand, we do not try him too high. The meat is either roasted or stewed and is always beef. The potatoes can easily be placed in water and, at some future time arbitrarily fixed, taken out again. They may be hard or they may be soft but they are still potatoes. And of course the cabbage. That, I think, must be soaked for some three weeks in water (it usually has that deep-sea greenish tint), the water then warmed and a

small percentage of the water drained off. For the rest—there is bread, butter and cheese (ready made), an occasional egg (again it may be fried or scrambled or both) and tea: all simple straightforward dishes. There is—or was—porridge. Gunner Murdoch was never able to discover whether the oats were the kind you soaked overnight or that patent kind that become porridge after thirty seconds' boiling. So he compromised. We met that threat by giving up porridge. After all, if one wants oats that way it is less bother to eat them raw.

But I am a long time in coming to the point. As Orderly Officer I had to inspect the men's dinner yesterday and they all complained that there was a lack of salt in the food. So I saw Gunner Murdoch about it.

He admitted freely that there was not enough salt, but explained that the store-keeper had not sent him any. Pressed, he agreed that he might have discovered it the day before but still

the store-keeper ought to have sent it. I conceded that point and asked him why he had not noticed that his supply was running low. He said that he might have done if he had looked, and that the store-keeper ought to have sent it. I went further and asked him when he discovered the inadequacy of the salt supply, and he said that he discovered it that morning when the store-keeper did not send any. I asked him when he had asked for some more but he said— Yes, he said that the store-keeper had not sent any.

Obviously one could continue that kind of conversation for years, so I broke off the engagement in fairly good order by saying that he ought to keep an eye on these things, and he said Yes, he would, but— I got out of earshot.

A good soldier, Murdoch. First, he does not know when he is beaten. secondly, he believes in sticking to his colours.

My other problem is the stove in our



mess. We live in a series of standardised huts with standardised fittings, including standardised stoves. I have no doubt that the stoves are of a well tried design, and that the fact that the smoke invariably blows down the chimney is just bad luck because the wind blows from the wrong quarter (or perhaps because the wind blows at all. Perhaps they were designed to work best in dead calm). What I do complain about is that we are given no fuel. We get clinker for road-making, but it has ceased to be a really good fuel at that stage. We also have a few spare tree-trunks, but they do not fit the stove very well; also they provide a lot of smoke. So we have the alternative. Either we sit in a fireless mess-hut or we sit in a mess-hut full of smoke. There is of course always one's respirator, but you have no idea how that deadens conversation.

On the other hand we have had a

little quiet fun with the plans of the official P.A.D. hut (which is a place designed to deal with you if you are gassed). They have two peculiarities, one is that the lightly gassed cases, who need a shower-bath only, are precluded from entering the shower-bath compartment (save over the partition) owing to an absence of doors. On the other hand the heavily gassed cases (after their bath in hot water, of which we have none, and no means of providing it) are condemned to stay in this room (for the same reason) unless they are removed either:

- (a) through an oubliette, which is a difficult thing for the amateur to make, or
- (b) through the skylight. (Yes, there is a skylight.)

We are going to design one of our own, patent it, and spend the first three years of the next peace in prosecuting

our claims before the War Inventions Tribunal which will doubtless be set up. Thus we proceed to victory.

Your loving Son,  
HAROLD.

P.S.—Do I sound a little depressed? It has rained for the last (censored) days.

P.P.S.—If you meet that M.P. again tell him I still haven't been paid. I cannot afford to finance this war myself.

### NAVY NUMBER

THE next issue of *Punch*, dated November 29th, will contain a supplement of 24 pages consisting of drawings and letterpress illustrating Mr. Punch's reactions to the Senior Service since 1841.



POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS—ENGLAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

## At the Pictures

### ANOTHER SMALL TOWN

*Career* (Director: LEIGH JASON) was obviously produced with one eye on *A Man to Remember*. To be sure the point made is a different one, but it's the same sort of point, made in the same way by the same actor (EDWARD ELLIS), and what might be called the mood of the picture is identical. Small-town stuff again; but not as cleverly done. The direction is competent, but it lacks what seemed

to my possibly hypnotised senses to be the distinction of GARSON KANIN'S. In fact the film is a minor work; in a week of light comedy it stands out only because it tries to point a serious moral.

There is one unusual thing about the treatment. I haven't read the PHIL STRONG novel from which the picture is adapted; that may have begun in the same way; in any event the picture begins with a sort of "documentary" about the State of Iowa, in which the small town of the story is situated. Gradually the field of vision narrows to the town itself, and the people of the town. It's effective, the idea of introducing one to the place as if one were a visitor, with the commentator whispering in one's ear "That's Clem Bartholomew . . ." But there isn't much that's unusually effective about the rest of the film. The period is 1930-1931; the chief character is a small shopkeeper; the big scene is one in which he makes a speech about liberty to a crowd that is ready to lynch him because they believe he has ruined them by taking his money out of the local bank.

Comic relief is supplied by the town drunks, well played by LEON ERROL and RAYMOND HATTON. Mr. ELLIS is as stern and pawky as before. A minor film, I repeat; but sound, workmanlike and entertaining.

As I implied, most of the others this week are light comedies. *Every Other Inch a Lady* (Director: S. SYLVAN SIMON) is for anyone who wants a

cheerful picture full of well-played jazz. (The band is ARTIE SHAW'S.) As for the story, that may be suggested by the original title of this piece in the U.S.: *Dancing Co-Ed*. Why they changed it for us I can't imagine; to elevate a well-known crack to the prominence of a title is all very well if it has any bearing on the subject, but I don't see much of a connection here. Certainly we have a professional dancer who is "planted" in a college so that she can win a "nation-wide talent contest" for a "dancing co-ed" to appear in a film: but nobody suggests

well played (JOAN BLONDELL, MELVYN DOUGLAS, WALTER CONNOLLY); nobody needs to take it seriously. It deals with a café waitress at an American university and a visiting English professor of . . . wait for it . . . Greek mythology. The waitress goes to New York and—I forget by what precise intricacies of coincidence—gets involved with the family of one of those film millionaires. The professor was engaged to the daughter of this family, who loved another. The waitress straightens everything out, of course . . .

I see no reason to be annoyed with this picture. Trivial it is, certainly, but it's also funny and, I insist, well done. Miss BLONDELL is always worth seeing, and though Mr. DOUGLAS may not seem to you very English, his unobtrusive competence here is very satisfactory.

There is also a farce, with the Crazy Gang. The first Crazy Gang film was *Okay For Sound*, and I remember it with gratitude, for it gave me more genuine, helpless, aching "belly-laughs" than I knew what to do with. Either I'm hardened to the dose or else the Gang aren't so good. Their latest is *The Frozen Limits* (Director: MARCEL VARNEL), and though it has its uproarious moments it is a patchy production. I wouldn't

keep you away; by all means go and see the Gang in Alaska forty years late for a gold rush, with MOORE MARRIOTT as an aged prospector who finds gold when he walks in his sleep: I merely suggest that the picture might be funnier.

One pleasing notion here is that the Mounted Police, being led to the rescue, are exasperatingly slow because they will insist on singing all the time about always getting their man. There is also a scene in which all the members of the Gang are wandering about in the dark in night-shirts, each one pretending to be the aged prospector—who is wandering about similarly clad himself. (But the MARX Brothers have been funnier in night-shirts . . .)

Ah, well—it's a good deal better than not laughing at all. R. M.



(*Every Other Inch a Lady*)

### POP MAKES A POINT

"Pops" Marlow . . . . .	LEON ERROL
Patty Marlow . . . . .	LANA TURNER
"Pug" Braddock . . . . .	RICHARD CARLSON
Joe Drews . . . . .	ROSCOE KARNS

that this makes her less of a "lady" than the other competitors. . . .

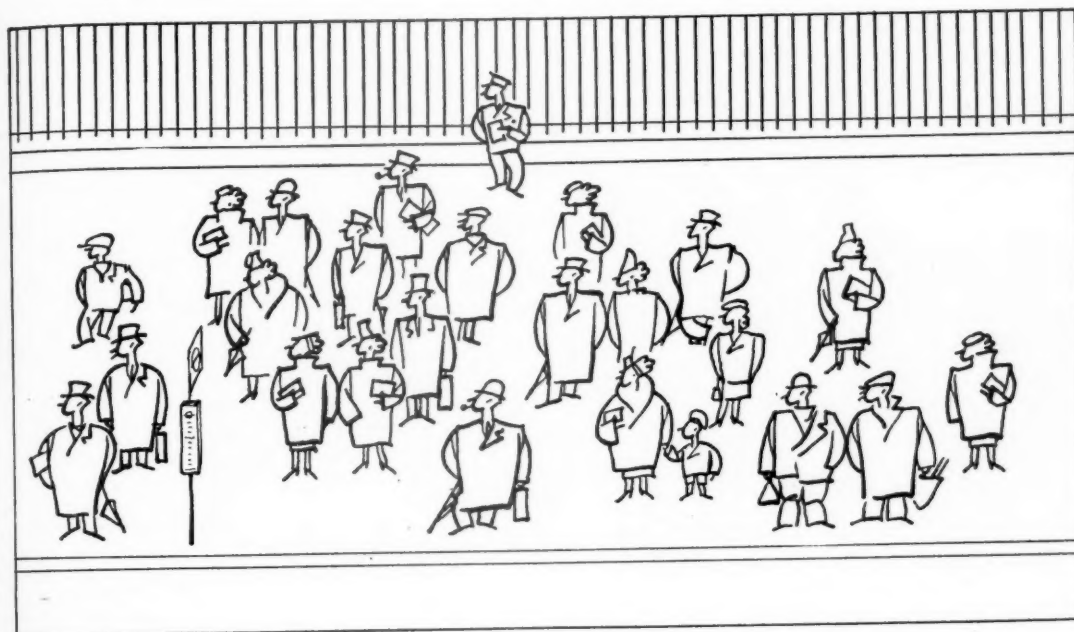
LANA TURNER, M.-G.-M.'s new beauty, is the girl; RICHARD CARLSON is the man on the college newspaper who—to be quite frank I forget all the involutions of the plot, but they matter little. This is a cheerful picture full of well-played jazz; there you are. And the director takes it very fast.

LEON ERROL is here again as the girl's father. I'm glad to see him getting away from those short comedies in which he has been wasted for years.

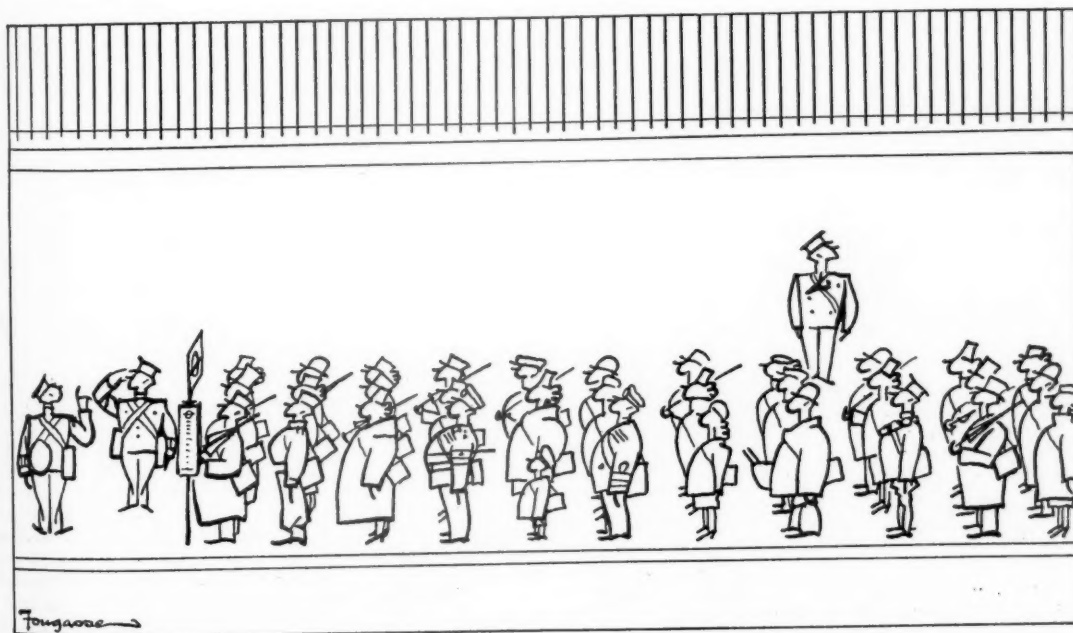
Then there is *Good Girls Go To Paris* (Director: ALEXANDER HALL). This has roused at least one reviewer to stern moral condemnation of the characters, which seems to me uncalled for. The thing is an amusing trifle very

THE CHANGING FACE OF BRITAIN

XV.—BUS STOP



1



Tongue

2



"Hello, Rescue Party. A high-explosive bomb has completely destroyed this control centre here. This is only a practice message, actually . . ."

## Behind the Lines

### IX.—"Unity"

**H**ERR HITLER rose a little late  
And told the Chief of Staff to wait . . .  
And sent for him at half-past eight  
And ordered an attack.  
The Chief of Staff replying "When?"  
And adding "Not by half-past ten?"  
The Fuehrer took his fountain-pen  
And wrote him out the sack.

So far the day was going well:  
He drew a walnut from its shell  
And breakfasted, and rang the bell  
And ordered up the clique.  
And Goebbels, Himmler, Frick and Hess,  
And Ribbentrop and Ley and—yes,  
Stout Goering in his fancy-dress  
Arrived to hear him speak.

"My faithful friends," Herr Hitler said—  
And wished that one or two were dead  
And Goering's neck were not so red—  
"My trusty friends and true,

I do not want to make a speech"—  
("Mein lieber Gott!" said each to each,  
And felt for anything in reach)—  
"The Time has come to Do!"

"Do whom?" thought Goebbels with a grin.  
But Himmler thought he meant "Do in,"  
And rather hoped one might begin  
With Ribbentrop, the swine.  
And Ribbentrop, who felt inside  
Exactly what that look implied,  
Hummed in a careless way and tried  
To think about his wine.

"Now, as our Aryan Shakespeare taught,  
By action not by sicklied thought  
The Ship of State is safely brought  
To harbours strange and rich.  
Be bloody, bold and resolute!"  
And Frick, who didn't give a hoot  
For Shakespeare, thought: "This means the boot  
For one of us, but which?"

"Good fortune in our fight attends  
Brave men who rise to reach their ends  
On stepping-stones of their dead friends—  
Who dies if Hitler stands?"  
And Goebbels in a wild surmise  
Kept thinking to himself "Who dies?"  
And caught the look in Goering's eyes,  
And half put up his hands.

"Be rich in action, rich in deed,  
And suit the action to the need;  
Be rich in faith that men succeed  
Who take the lonely way.  
Be rich, not gaudy." With an oath  
The faithful Goering, who was both,  
Scowled at Herr Hess who, nothing loth,  
Scowled at the faithful Ley.

"Now go, my faithful friends. Rejoice  
That God has given me the choice  
Between—" And suddenly his voice  
Rose to a maddened shout:  
"Be off! Your faces make me sick!  
And Goering's neck is much too thick!  
It's bad enough to look at Frick,  
But Ribbentrop—! Get out!"

Herr Frick decided not to stay,  
Goebbels and Goering said "Good day,"  
Hess, Himmler, Ribbentrop and Ley  
Left hastily for home . . .  
And Hitler pulled his forelock back,  
And countermanded the attack,  
And gave two Admirals the sack,  
And tried to ring up Rome.

A. A. M.

"In every shape and form they had gone out to form an amicable understanding between each other."—*Northern Paper*.  
Did they try as doves?





"I say—one of your bags has busted."

### TO WORKING PARTIES

CAN YOU get all the materials you require for making up those much-appreciated comforts for our Hospitals?

Mr. Punch can help you, and with his Hospital Comforts Fund has been supplying large quantities of these materials to recognised organisations:

Chintz .. .. .	350 yards.
Bleached Calico .. ..	640 "
Unbleached Calico .. ..	300 "
Turkey Twill .. .. .	50 "
Flannelette .. .. .	2,504 "
Winceyette .. .. .	3,875 "
<i>Knitting Wool :</i>	
Khaki/grey .. .. .	2,432 lb.
White .. .. .	1,604 "
Navy Blue .. .. .	817 "

BUT he needs co-operation if he is to carry on this work. If you have not already done so, ask your friends to send him all the money they can spare; then tell him of your needs and he will help you to send Comforts to the Hospitals.

Every penny sent him is spent on buying materials, and thanks to the generous co-operation of the Trades concerned, Mr. Punch is buying cheaply and well.

He takes no money for running expenses.

Please help and help NOW.

All inquiries and subscriptions should be addressed to: Punch Hospital Comforts Fund, 10 Bouverie Street, E.C.4.

A further need is Knitted Woollen Comforts for the Army in France. Will kind donors despatch their gifts at once to Army Comforts Depot, St. Mary's Butts, Reading. It is especially requested that when sending donations or Comforts donors will send inside their letter or parcel their name and address. This Depot has been unable to acknowledge many gifts for lack of this information.

Amongst Comforts of this nature are included:

Mittens, Mufflers, Socks, Helmets and Pullovers (with or without sleeves).

### The Passing of Autumn

THE North wind comes,  
And the beech-trees' glory is low,  
And the crack by the door-post hums,  
And a sound like the beating of drums  
In the trees throbs swift, then slow,  
And the birds come closer for crumbs,  
And the sun sets redly aglow  
And is warning of snow.

In old walled gardens soon  
Smoke from where dead leaves burn  
Will drift like a mournful tune,  
And anon the November moon  
Will light at last the return,  
From northern forest and dune,  
Of woodcock home to the fern  
For which they yearn.

And the geese from over the sea  
Will soon come sailing high,  
Passing exultantly  
Like a long letter V  
Written clear in the sky.  
And in towns no man will see,  
But the countryman hears their cry  
Like the voice of a prophecy.



"Well, I'm afraid you'll have to stay indoors, that's all."

## Russiprussity

(A Fantasy—translated from the Russian)

**B**UT," said Herr von Robbintrip testily, "you do not seem to realise the position, M. Buzzinoff. The patience of the Fuehrer is exhausted!"

"In that case, without doubt," replied the Senior Commissar for Vaguely Assisting the Germans, "the Fuehrer will send for his envoys, as usual; and tranquillity will return to Moscow. We shall hate to lose you, dear Robbintrip. We shall part with pain from the delightful von Poopen, who on this visit shared your commodious aeroplane. But we shall endure it. For the patience of the Fuehrer will recover: and then we shall you see again."

"Next time," the Commissar for Innumerable Exports remarked, "he will probably send Herr Himmler as well."

There was a short silence. In the Smaller Banqueting Room of the Krumblyn the lights blazed, the cigar-smoke sought the painted ceiling, the vodka simmered in the samovar. Herr von Poopen grunted a little, and Herr von Robbintrip, controlling himself, said quietly:

"It is now many weeks since we signed the Pacts for Dynamic Non-Aggression and Positive Mutual Economic Co-operation. But what has resulted? Where is the fraternal iron ore you promised us? Where is the refreshing river of oil? And the proletarian butter?"

"And where, for that matter," said Herr von Poopen, "are the two thousand aeroplanes?"

"You speak of patience," said the Senior Commissar dreamily. "Patience," he repeated, "patience." And he closed his eyes.

"I spoke of iron ore," said von Robbintrip warmly.

"Patience," said the S.C.V.A.G., opening his eyes. "Is it not an extraordinary thing? The Russians have it. The Chinese have it. Even the English have it. We put up with the Tsars for centuries; the English have put up with their weather for many more. The Chinese are so accustomed to war that they simply do not admit that a war has properly begun till it has lasted for eighty years. Long before it is over the soldiers who began it are grandfathers and have quite forgotten what it is about. But they don't mind. They have patience. But you Germans and your Fuehrer—"

"Heil Hitler!" snapped Robbintrip.

"Heil Hitler!" echoed Poopen.

"As you will," said M. Buzzinoff mildly. "Though I must confess that personal salutes are repugnant to the Soviet mentality, and martial gestures at table are generally counted as symptoms of a latent bourgeois ideology. However. Dear me, where was I?"

"Iron ore," said Robbintrip.

"Aeroplanes," said Poopen.

"Submarines," said the Ambassador.

"No, gentlemen. There I shall maintain that you are wrong. I was going to remark that if your Fuehrer does not get what he wants in a week-end his patience is exhausted. The conclusion from that, if you will permit

me to suggest it, is that the original stock of patience was small. Now, an incapacity for patience is a sign of low breeding, lack of confidence, and mental instability. It shows—"

"We must have ore! We must have oil! We must have oats! We must—"

"You must have ice," said the Senior Commissar sympathetically. "We have a lot of ice. Really, we could let you have all the ice you will require. You will need much ice to preserve the butter we shall send you."

"When will you send the butter?" said Robbintrip eagerly.

"Obviously," the Commissar responded, "it would be a pity to send the butter till the ice is in position, ready to preserve it. How many million tons of our good Soviet ice will you take?"

"We do not want your flaming ice."

"In that case the butter will not keep."

"You mock us, Buzzinoff," said Robbintrip, rising angrily. "I must see M. Steelin. Where is M. Steelin?"

"Steelin, I dare say," said the Commissar, "is in bed."

"In bed! At this hour?"

"In bed, and laughing."

"Laughing?"

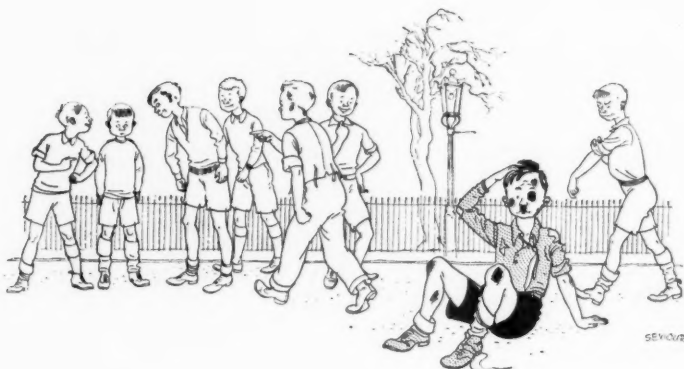
"Laughing. For a long time there has been no laughter in Russia. To-day there is much laughter. The great Steelin himself spends half the day laughing. Some days he cannot stop himself. He exhausts himself with laughing. Then he must go to bed for rest. And still he laughs. If you should feel vibration in the Krumblyn it is the great bed of Loonin shaking with the laughter of Steelin."

"I do not see much to laugh about," said Robbintrip.

"Well, that is really very extraordinary," said the Senior Commissar smoothly. "Yesterday, as it happens. I laid before him our Vague Plan for Supplying the Germans with Five Hundred Soviet Submarines. M. Steelin laughed so strongly that he had to go to bed at once. I think he will be in bed for some days."

"What is laughable in that?" said Robbintrip. "We need the submarines for the mass attack on Britain. When they are in position off the coast divers will leave the submarines and, entering England, co-operate with the parachute men. When the English see the divers they will collapse. I know them."

"While you were speaking," said the Commissar with a start, "I was endeavouring to recall the exact words of M. Steelin. 'Submarines!' he said, laughing ('Ha, ha!') in that manner."



"Now it's Ginger's turn to be 'Itler!'"

Five hundred Soviet submarines! Is it not,' said he, 'a comical conception? When you consider, Buzzinoff,' he said, 'that in Soviet Russia we are quite unable to keep the simplest agricultural tractor in motion for more than a mile or two on land, is it not extraordinary that even the Germans should think us capable of directing with success so many highly complicated pieces of mechanism under the water? Moreover,' he said—laughing ('Ha, ha!') like that—'I send my mind back to the autumn of the last year, 1938, when the Great Hitler would not admit the horrid Russians to the Council table. And now,' said M. Steelin, laughing ('Ha, ha, ha!') like that, 'the statesmen of the great Hitler are standing (like bread-queues) at my back-door asking for submarines and iron ore. Excuse me if I laugh, Comrade Buzzinoff,' he said. 'Excuse me also if now I go to bed'—still laughing ('Ha, ha, ha!') in that manner."

"I do not see anything so funny in that," said Herr von Poopen. "The English, not so long ago, were in the queue as well."

"True. But the English had the good sense to go away. I think, too, the English know us a little better than the Germans. It is impossible to imagine an Englishman who would trust himself to a Soviet submarine."

"How about the aeroplanes?"

"Comrade Poopen," said the Commissar, "permit me to say that you interest me profoundly. It has been said that failure is always more interesting than success. You, Comrade, must be the most striking figure in history. For you have failed in all things you have attempted: yet here you are, an ambassador still. When M. Steelin heard that you were coming he laughed for two days and a night, and sent for a doctor—('Ha, ha!') in that manner."

"These aeroplanes——"

"You have read, no doubt, of the centurion who says to one, 'Go,' and he goeth, to another, 'Do this,' and he doeth it. That, I apprehend, is not your own experience, dear Poopen. And now, when you would wish to speak of aeroplanes I find myself irresistibly compelled to discuss some other matter. I cannot help it. Is it not strange?"

"Then," said Robbintrip, "let us speak of your Ogpu. We learn that your Ogpu has been spying upon our Gestapo in the parts of Poland generously conceded by the Fuehrer. In the secret clauses of the Pact it was agreed that the Gestapo might spy upon the Ogpu (for this is fitting) and

necessary to Germany's security); but nothing was said about the Ogpu spying on the Gestapo. The innocent boys of the Gestapo have never been spied on before, and they do not like it."

"It is odd, Herr von Robbintrip," said the Commissar, yawning, "that you are able to speak of pacts and agreements. For myself, I have never been able to attach the smallest importance to them. Now, if you will excuse me, I shall go to bed—and laugh."

"But the ore! the oil!" squeaked Robbintrip, springing furiously to

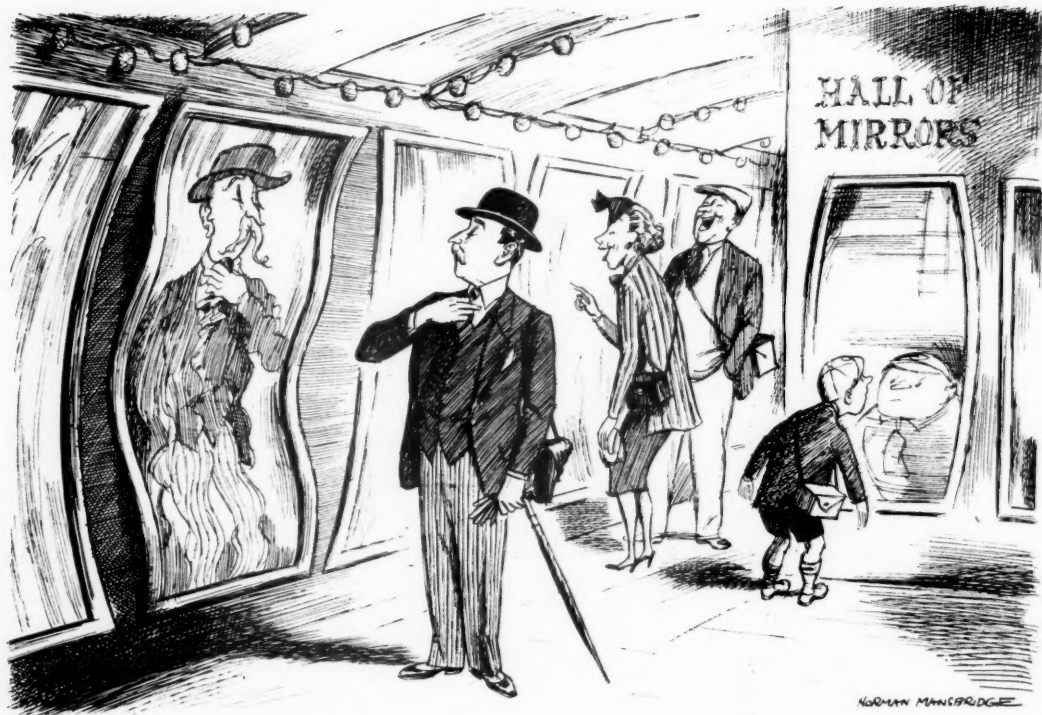
his feet. "What is my Fuehrer going to say if again I return with nothing?"

"Do you know," replied the Commissar, "I am one of the innumerable persons who care very little *what* your Fuehrer says, on any occasion. But I tell you what, speaking of exports—the only exports that Russia has ever had worth speaking of are female dancers, and gentlemen who can dance sitting down. We still have a number of female dancers, and four or five of these we will send to Berlin. Your Fuehrer, I believe, likes female dancers. Good night." A. P. H.



"My umbrella is missing!"

"Himmel! Chamberlain!!"



### *The Accuracy of the East*

*(Based on information culled from a letter to "The Times")*

THE Burmese as a race are given to classify  
All things that are; such is their native wont;  
Just for the moment I should be an ass if I  
Enlarged upon that statement, so I don't.

Of high swear-words they number twenty-seven  
Distinct varieties, and here again,  
Though you may ask what in the name of heaven  
Makes them do that, I could but shan't explain.

Last but not least, of all things prejudicial  
To human weal, they set in Class the First  
Water and fire and, mark you, the official;  
Those three, despite all others, are the worst.

(Disease and pain, as you'll observe, are reckoned  
As minor evils; to the Burmese mind  
Th' official is the first and makes the second  
But stands up clear above his lesser kind.)

We up till now, though mildly prone to grumble,  
Have held him as an ill the high gods send

Maybe as discipline to make us humble,  
Even perhaps to serve some useful end.

We could not realise his dammed-up vastness,  
His hidden deeps we failed to understand,  
But now when leaking from his peace-time fastness,  
He spreads, a growing terror, o'er the land,

Now when we watch him creeping, widelier creeping  
With files washed lapping up on each new shore,  
We wonder why the Burmese view, though sweeping,  
Never somehow occurred to us before.

The Press has known much correspondence lately  
On this same evil; men have blown off steam  
Bravely but, granting that they suffered greatly,  
Have done faint justice to the swelling theme.

Yet 'twas for this no doubt the Burman classified  
His orient wealth of language rich and blue;  
Having his gift, we might ourselves grow pacified,  
Except that twenty-seven seems too few.

DUM-DUM.





### TRUE SYMPATHY

"We only want to make certain that you aren't being intimidated by the Allies."

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## Impressions of Parliament

### Synopsis of the Week

**Tuesday, November 14th.**—Commons: Debate on Shipping.

**Wednesday, November 15th.**—Lords: Debate on Secret Session. Commons: Various Measures advanced.

**Thursday, November 16th.**—Lords: Debate on War Aims.

Commons: Statement by Chancellor of Exchequer on Progress of War. Debate on Education in War.

**Tuesday, November 14th.**—In spite of our eloquent plea last week (and that of the Opposition) the Criminal Justice Bill has had to be dropped. The position is that it is in a sort of coma, from which the Government may later revive it, if circumstances allow, by the application of constitutional sal volatile. Sir JOHN SIMON promised this afternoon that the sal volatile would be available if there was any chance of using it.

Mr. P.'s R. has been hoping every day since September to hear that Lord NUFFIELD had offered to pay for the war, for there is no doubt it would be a very popular act. It is still not too late, and in the meantime another £50,000 has come from that generous pocket for Service comforts. Lord NUFFIELD had asked, said Mr. HORE-BELISHA, that £15,000 of it should be spent on wireless sets for the Forces in France.



GAGGED

Lord ARNOLD, proposing a Secret Session, complained of the reticence imposed on Peers in public sittings.

Very solid increases in Service separation allowances are to be made. There has been much complaint that the allowance for each child beyond the third should only have been one shilling



THE CHIEF MOURNER

Sir SAMUEL HOARE laments the untimely demise of his dear little Bill.

a week, for it was felt that when this was compared with the allowances given for the upkeep of evacuated children the difference was startling; and Mr. HORE-BELISHA told the House that inquiries had convinced him that high rents were the chief cause of hardships. The Government had therefore decided:

To increase the rates for children so that four shillings would be paid for the second child and three shillings for each additional child;

To empower the Military Service (Special Allowances) Advisory Committee to grant up to two pounds a week, quite apart from other allowances, in cases where particular difficulties such as high rent could be proved.

These benefits will apply to the families of sailors, soldiers and airmen, and the children's will be retrospective as from November 13th. Mr. HORE-BELISHA also described a special grant, up to two pounds a week, which men could claim who were finding it hard to keep up to date with payments for houses. It was altogether a gay day for the Forces.

The House is not very pleased by the appointment of Sir JOHN GILMOUR as

Minister of Shipping, since he lacks experience in that field, but it is delighted that Sir ARTHUR SALTER, who was Director of Ship Requisitioning in the last war, has been made his

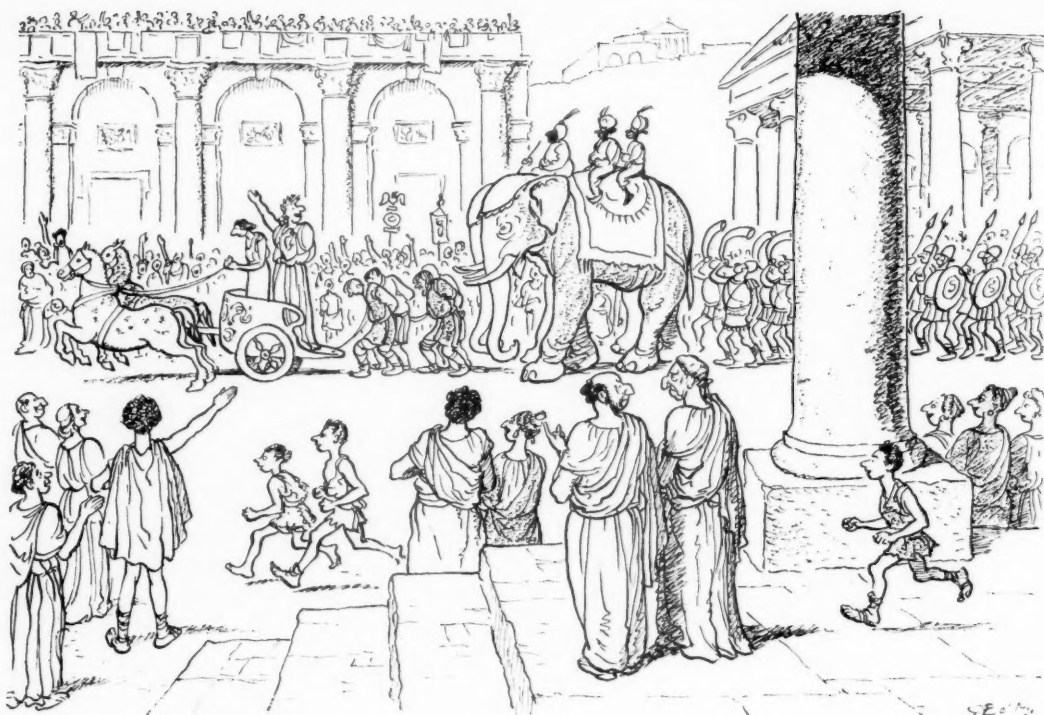
Parliamentary Secretary. The Opposition raised the question of shipping this evening, Mr. SHINWELL suggesting that the convoy system was not working smoothly, that the Government were taking over the wrong kind of vessel, and that neutral ship-owners were being paid monstrous sums for carrying our cargoes. This last point was emphasised by a tramp-owner, Colonel ROPNER, who said that neutrals were piling up reserves while the home industry was making no profit and often substantial losses. (He pleased the House with an account of how two of his ships had engaged and crippled German submarines, which were afterwards sunk by destroyers). Mr. KIRKWOOD asked for a practical shipbuilder on the staff of the Ministry, and Commander FLETCHER described the very bad conditions still existing in some merchant vessels. In reply, Sir JOHN GILMOUR had a good answer as regards the convoys, that only seven ships had been lost out of three thousand and seventy which had sailed; the freights problem was being reconsidered, and those yards not engaged on naval construction would be kept busy on replacements.

**Wednesday, November 15th.**—The



"THERE'S A SWEET LITTLE CHERUB . . ."

Sir ARTHUR SALTER, newly appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Shipping.



"Who does he think he is, anyway—Napoleon?"

Lords were pretty solidly in favour of the idea of a secret session at which they could say what they liked about the conduct of the war, but in the Government's name Lord STANHOPE turned it down. His argument was that it would be a mistake to let a united nation feel it was being kept out in the cold, and that such a meeting would give the enemy propaganda department a splendid chance to announce that Parliament was split over an immediate peace with Germany. He promised, however, that if the need arose the Government were quite prepared to give way.

The Navy had the best of Questions to-day, Mr. SHAKESPEARE announcing that an annual minimum of fourteen days' leave had been arranged, that more would be given whenever possible and that seven days' Christmas leave would be the rule for those who could be spared.

Captain WALLACE had good news too for the parents of evacuated children. Starting from December 3rd, but missing the Sundays on either side of Christmas when the railways will be too busy, excursion return tickets will be available at single rates for distances

up to eighty miles and at still further reductions beyond. For each reception area special trains will be run at monthly intervals. Captain WALLACE added that where children had to be visited because of illness, tickets would be free.

"L" is to be let loose again on the roads. Driving tests would begin once more on January 1st, said Captain WALLACE.

Sir RICHARD ACLAND's attempt to bring in a Private Bill to give the Criminal Justice Bill a sporting chance in the next Session was thwarted partly because of a violent though not very relevant attack on it by Sir HERBERT WILLIAMS, and partly because the House obviously disliked such a tampering with procedure.

The rest of the day was dull. The Official Secrets Act got its Second Reading in time for the House to get away for dinner.

Thursday, November 16th.—Instead of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, whose gout is better but still with him, Sir JOHN SIMON to-day surveyed the war. Lord STANHOPE addressed the Lords in similar terms, the debate in that House ending with a long set-to between

Lord SALISBURY and Lord SAMUEL. Sir JOHN had little to say about the progress of a war which has obstinately refused to begin, but he spoke of gallant actions by the R.A.F., and of the splendid though unspectacular work of the Navy. Describing the way in which the Allied replies to the peace appeal from the Low Countries had been twisted in Berlin, he welcomed the apparent relaxation in tension on the German frontier of Holland, though he thought it not surprising that German assurances were no longer taken at their face value. During the last fortnight the position of the Allies had been variously strengthened: by the restoration of our right to buy supplies in the United States, by the visit of the French Finance Minister, Monsieur REYNAUD, with whom there had been the closest collaboration, and by the fruitful discussions which had taken place with the Dominions Ministers.

Later the House turned to the effects of evacuation on schools. Mr. LINDSAY grew lyrical about the benefits of country life, and it was generally agreed that the Board of Education had a new chance to be constructive.



# In Memoriam

"ALGOL"

A GREAT many, for he had a regiment of friends, must be finding it very difficult to believe that CYRIL BRETHERTON is dead. He had the quality of youthfulness which, had he lived, would have defied old age, and that the life which he met with so much zest should have been taken from him at no more than sixty seems almost impossible.

Although that was not the chief thing about him, which was himself, he was a writer of great charm and extraordinary diversity. As long ago as 1903 he began writing for Mr. Punch, and since then he has been a frequent and valued contributor, most of his work being light verse distinguished by a satirical appreciation of contemporary values and an unusual metrical facility. In addition he took over the "Essence of Parliament" from ALGERNON LOCKER and wrote it until 1933, bringing to bear on it his deep knowledge of politics and history and his penetrating wit.

His output was prodigious. For many years he was on the staff of *The Morning Post*, rejoining it towards its end as "Peter Simple," and for some time he had been leader-writer to *The Evening News*. For these papers and for others he also wrote light verse, causing daily consternation in a morning carriage between Oxford and Paddington by balancing his typewriter on his knees and beating out a set of verses, after which he combed an armful of the day's papers for material for the leader he would write on arrival at his office. If the verses were not finished by Reading, he considered it a bad morning, yet they always bore the apparent polish of long hours of work. He carried a typewriter as other men carry an umbrella. His contempt for the artistic temperament in its grosser forms was unbounded. To him writing was a job, and not even pneumatic drills could break into his concentration. Nor did danger worry him.

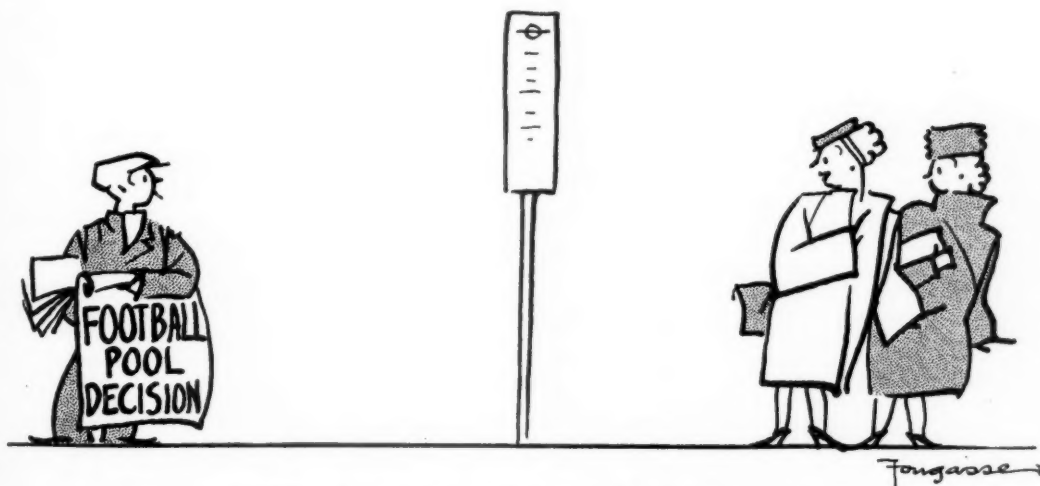
The reports he sent out of Dublin when he was a correspondent during the "troubles" lashed the natives so mercilessly that his life was only saved by the intervention of the American Consul.

There seemed to be little he hadn't done. He had played the banjo for a troupe, he had written and produced plays for a strolling company, he had practised with success at the American Bar. But what mattered most about "ALGOL" and what will be most missed was his rare capacity for friendship and his unaffectedly honest personality. Young men delighted in his company, and he in theirs. His conversation, flowing humorously through a great haze of cigar-smoke, was cinematic in its vividness and incredibly well-informed. Yet he was entirely modest, never realising how good he was, and he took as much pleasure in listening as in talking. He was a natural radical in mind; vested interest of any sort aroused his immediate suspicion, and to all forms of pomposity and humbug he brought a magnificently puncturing disrespect. At the same time he inclined to the Right in politics, though he had too much originality to fit into any orthodox mould. Above all, he was one of the most generous people who ever lived.

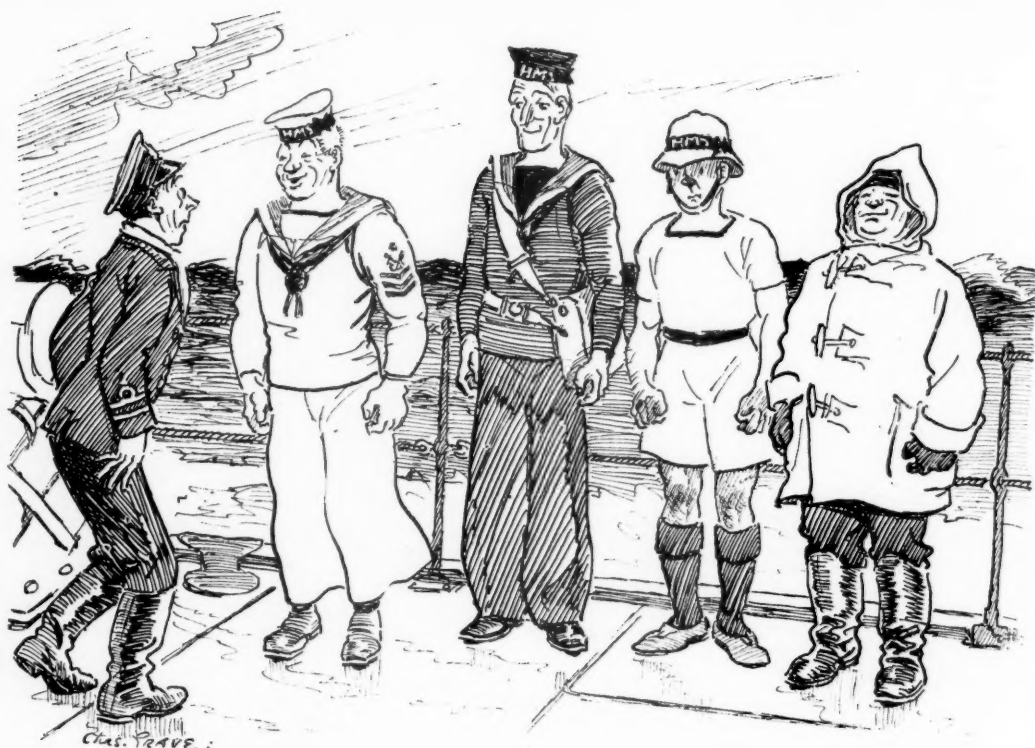
Only a month ago he wrote a poem called "War Harvest" in these pages. Its last verse was strangely prophetic:

*"Pale splendour fills the West  
As home to their brief rest  
Go wain and wagoner.  
Light breezes stir  
The still green, gracious leaves  
Where Autumn weaves  
Spells more enduring far  
Than the mad dreams of War."*

On that note any poet might have been glad to end.



"Now don't tell me there's a shortage of them!"



"It's to baffle U-boats as to where we are, Sir."

## Wheels of War

The Passing of the Battalion Accounts

ONE advantage of the war has been that a lot of strange officers have popped up from the reserve and are temporarily attached to us. What I really mean is, they've brought new stories into the mess: we were beginning to know all Colonel Howitzer's and Major Saddleflap's by heart.

Last night, for instance, one Lieut.-Colonel Girthweight pulled a beauty out of the bag while we sat discussing Hitler and port.

Some while ago, it seemed, he'd been commanding a battalion in India for the first time, and at the end of the financial year sent up the regimental accounts to the Command Paymaster for approval. Now in England this generally means a short correspondence on various points raised, and after explanations and adjustment the accounts are ultimately passed—with perhaps a friendly rap on the knuckles

about some dubious outlay "for military requirements."

In India, however, Colonel Girthweight found it different. Having got the accounts off, he received in three days a polite acknowledgment and nothing more. He naturally assumed that the matter was closed, and in fact was delighted at encountering such unparalleled amity and trustfulness.

He hadn't of course then realised that most of the routine machinery of Indian life is in the hands of the Babu, a native clerk with a high-powered English education; nor that it is run by him with a meticulous attention to detail and an intense love of verbal argument.

He was therefore considerably surprised to receive after three more days a letter signed by the Command Paymaster running to five pages and commenting vigorously on every aspect

of the accounts. There was hardly an item of expenditure that wasn't turned inside out and held up to the light, and the whole document dripped with queries.

For some time the Colonel tried to reconcile the Command Paymaster's well-known love of polo, as a distraction from his office labours, with the fact that he must have spent twenty-three hours out of every twenty-four in the office to have composed that letter in the time. Then his eye was caught by phrases like, "and, oh, sir, if this be so, it would appear that a serious defalcation must be raising an occulted head like a snake in the night," and "in Item 7 there is a lurching suggestion falsi." At which he realised that the Command Paymaster hadn't done much more than formally sign the letter between "chukkers."

After two days' solid conference with

his Pay-Sergeant, during which they tried unsuccessfully to compose an answer, the Pay-Sergeant reported sick with a nervous breakdown, and Girthweight went to see the Command Paymaster in person.

"Answer it how you like," said the Command Paymaster, impatiently tapping his riding-boot with a crop at the door. "My head clerk, Babu Ram Das, drafted it: he won't mind what you say."

"Can I tell him what I think in person?" asked Girthweight hopefully.

"Lord, no! You must answer it formally."

"But I haven't the time—my Pay-Sergeant's sick—my orderly-room clerks don't understand finance—my . . ."

The Command Paymaster looked at his watch. "Got to go in a minute, but I tell you what—borrow a clerk for a day from my office here. They're well up in the subject . . . Whoa, there, Kitty! Whoa . . .! Er—so long . . .! *Sais!* Why's that damn martingale so tight? . . ."

Left alone, Colonel Girthweight waited a moment, then strode into the clerks' room. . . . Next morning from

the Command Paymaster's office there reported at Battalion H.Q., for what he called "a day's loan duty *in re* financial consultation over unaccountable accounts," no less a person than Babu Ram Das himself. He was handed his own letter and without a smile on his shiny brown bespectacled face sat down to give it "some earnest perusing."

"Oh, Sir," he reported later, "this letter has made many slip-ups. To take one exemplification, it is not strictly within the Command Paymaster's authority to persecute an inquiry into this item of one rupee eight annas for—"

"All right, Babu," said Girthweight politely. "You go ahead and draft an answer."

By that evening a lengthy document awaited Colonel Girthweight's signature. It was a masterly refutation of every point raised, and it blew through a myriad cleverly-discovered flaws in the original criticism like a gale through wire-netting. The Colonel signed it, thanked Ram Das, and considered the matter closed.

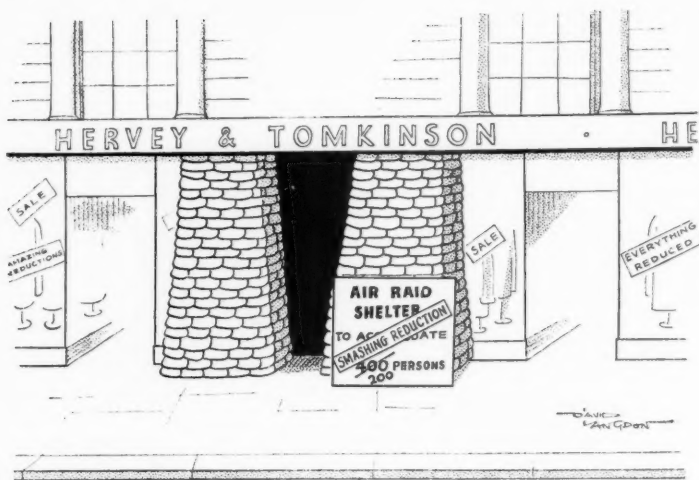
He little knew. A week later he got another letter from the Command

Paymaster—"While accepting some of the discriminations levelled at the head of my CP/A420/81/1Z of 14 ult., I have honour to postulate hypotheses 'A' to 'K' as hereinafter under-mentioned . . ." and so on. The Pay-Sergeant took one look at it and ran another temperature. The Colonel swore at Babu hypocrisy in general and Ram Das' baseness in particular, till he suddenly realised the matter was in his own hands. The next move was up to him. So he 'phoned over and borrowed Babu Ram Das once more.

Babu Ram Das excelled himself on this occasion. He tore the letter figuratively to shreds; he found obscure financial regulations and quoted them at the Command Paymaster. In fact he wiped the floor with him, and the Colonel was almost afraid to sign the letter—except that he now knew who the real recipient would be.

After this of course he wasn't surprised to get a shattering reply from the Command Paymaster, and even though this one was signed "R. Das, *per pro* C.P."—the polo competitions being in full swing—he felt it was quite an honor to borrow the Babu's services





again for an even more shattering retort.

Being himself busy when it came up to be signed, Ram Das obliged for him as well, and so he did not see it. It must, however, have been a real winner, because the correspondence abruptly ceased: or so Colonel Girthweight thought.

Three months later he suddenly came upon a "Battalion Accounts" file six inches thick, with the latest letter dated only the previous day. He then realised that Ram Das had merely cut out the figureheads in the business and had been trotting back and forth between the two offices, corresponding busily at himself all the time and, in short, revolving round his own axis with increasing centripetal energy.

"I tried to stop it," Colonel Girthweight told us in conclusion, "by ringing up the Command Paymaster and asking if he didn't need Ram Das' undivided services, because I didn't want to see him again. All he said was, No, he could spare him easily, as owing to pressure of work these last months he had now a brother of Ram Das' employed in his office as an additional clerk. And that evening Ram Das came up to me and said that in view of the increased work in my pay office he had advised the Adjutant to take on a full-time civilian clerk, 'a verree good man and a Failed B.A., my nephew, Sir.' . . .

"At that I gave it up, and a week or two later I went on the retired list. But for all I know the file's going on still and providing by now for most of Ram Das' family. More port, anyone . . . ?" A. A.

### Teaching My Grandmother

WHEN I was twelve years old my grandmother told me that I was to start work at a tinsmith's. My grandmother was a forceful personality. She had a way of making sure that what she said would come to pass. I didn't want to be a tinsmith. Nothing was further from my thoughts. So, although I had to go, I went with an obstinate determination to get the sack as soon as possible.

When I reached the tinsmith's for my first day's work I found that it would be extremely difficult not to get the sack. The truth was that the tinsmith wanted me even less than I wanted him. He had, in fact, told my grandmother quite plainly that he did not intend to have me. In spite of this blunt refusal my grandmother insisted that I should go, and I found myself torn between fear of the tinsmith's anger at my unlawful presence and fear of my grandmother's wrath should I go home.

That evening, when I returned to my grandmother, I told her that I had got the sack. She took me on one side and told me the story of my grandfather by way of encouragement.

My grandfather, it appeared, had been apprenticed to a haberdasher in a market town at an early age. He started work on a Friday, and, acting on a sudden impulse, had stolen all the wage packets on the Saturday morning. Such a lamentable beginning to a career, my grandmother inferred, might have been enough to damp his ardour for haberdashery. But did my grandfather's courage fail? On the

contrary, he went to work on Monday morning and bought the shop. It took him a great many years to live down the disgrace of the Saturday, but it was offset by the acumen of the Monday, and he was so successful that when he sold the business some forty years later he retired full of honour, with an inscribed marble clock and the close prospect of becoming an alderman.

This story did not make me want to become a tinsmith, but it convinced me of the futility of opposing my grandmother. The next day she herself took me back to the workshop and informed the unhappy proprietor that I was there to stay. The look she gave him was never forgotten.

After that I made several attempts to stop being a tinsmith, but none of them was successful. I now had two enemies. My grandmother was as determined as ever, and the tinsmith himself was so afraid of her that whenever I threatened to leave he would be seized with terror in case she should blame him.

After a few years I became resigned to my lot, and began to concentrate on making it as comfortable a one as I could. By continually threatening to leave I induced the tinsmith to raise my wages until I was earning nearly twice as much as my master, and when I had pushed him as far as I could without making him insolvent, I gradually reduced my quota of work until I was doing nothing at all. By this time I felt that my comfort and security were beginning to recompense me for my thwarted ambitions. Nevertheless, although I had nothing to do, I still did not dare to leave the tinsmithy during the day for fear of meeting my grandmother.

Now, after thirty years as a tinsmith, I can scarcely believe that there was a time when I did not want to be one. The wrench at parting from an occupation which has lasted a lifetime will be severe. For part I must, whatever my grandmother says.

At the outbreak of war, through the offices of a friend related to a member of His Majesty's Government, I placed my long experience at the disposal of my country. Two days ago I was informed that in view of my qualifications I had been appointed Comptroller of Pool Cheese for the Western Division.

I have not dared to tell my grandmother yet.

### Conjurors, Forward

"Will anyone owning a CAR that will become a white elephant offer same to parson . . . ?"—*Adet. in "The Times."*





## Kilts and Troosers

"An' hoo will we ken when we've won the war?" asked young Podgy McSumph. "Will it be when the Germins runs awa'?"

"Perhaps," I replied; "or perhaps they might tell us they don't want to fight any more."

"But I bet ye the Germins'll run awa' when they see the Scotch kilties comin' at them."

"But I've just read in the papers that the Scotch soldiers are not to wear kilts in this war."

"Whit are ye talkin' aboot?" scoffed Podgy. "The Scotch sodgers always wear kilts—the Black Watch and the Seaforths an'—an' the whole lot o' them."

"Yes, but the papers say that they are not wearing their kilts in this war."

"No' wearin' their kilts?" gasped Podgy. "Who told them no' to wear kilts?"

"Well, the generals, I suppose. The generals seem to think it will be better for them to fight without their kilts."

"Withoot their kilts?" echoed Podgy thoughtfully. "Are they to take aff their kilts for runnin' quicker when they're chasin' the Germins?"

"Well, no. You see—"

"An' put them on again when they come back from chasin' the Germins?"

"No, no, the Scotch soldiers are wearing troosers, just like the other soldiers."

"Troosers?" incredulously. "Ye're tellin' fibs. Because whit way would they have to wear troosers?"

"I think I read somewhere that the generals said they might get their legs scratched, and that—"

"But," irritably, "they wouldn't care if they got their legs scratched, because the Black Watch an' the Seaforths is great big sodgers wi' great big hairy legs for wearin' kilts wi'."

"Yes, but all the same—"

"I've went through nettles wi' ma kilt," nodding his head at me impressively, "an' I never cried when ma legs was stung."

"What were you going through nettles for?"

"I was chasin' a rabbit an' I never saw they was nettles till I was in them. But," he hastened to add, "I would have went through them even if I had saw they was nettles."

"But the stings must have been sore, weren't they?"

"Kilties," declared Podgy proudly,

"don't care for stings an' scratches. An' whit does these generals ken about kilts?" he demanded sharply.

"The generals are the leaders of the army; they are very clever men."

"But," angrily, "whit right have they to make the Scotch sodgers take aff their kilts an' put on troosers?"

"Soldiers must do what their generals tell them, Podgy."

"But," protested Podgy shrilly, "these dashed generals'll just go an' spoil the war, because the Germins'll no' ken it's the Scotch, an' maybe they'll no' run awa'."

"Ah, Podgy," snatching at the chance, "but perhaps it's a scheme. Perhaps the generals don't want the enemy to know it's the Scotch soldiers."

"No' want them to ken it's the Scotch?"

"Perhaps the generals want to surprise the enemy."

Podgy sat up, his face brightening. "An' will the Germins get a terrible fright when it turns oot to be the Scotch wi' troosers on?"

"Perhaps that's the idea."

"An' then the Germins'll run awa' a' the quicker, an' the Scotch'll be the winners?"

"Wouldn't that be splendid?"

"It'll be great," his face glowing. "But mind ye," giving me a stern look, "they've to get puttin' on their kilts again as soon as they get hame from the battle."

D.

"He told me on one occasion that it was his ability to snatch a short sheep at odd times that enabled him to maintain his vigour during the war."—*Natal Paper*.

Of course not everybody likes mutton.



## At the Play

"YOUNG ENGLAND"  
(HOLBORN EMPIRE)

It does one a power of good to meet *My Mother the Duchess* again, *My Daughter Lady Mary*, that frightful man *Hope Ravenscroft* and the rest of them. I was so afraid they were lost to us for ever, and that those dervish yells of "Give him half-a-crown!" and "Go on, marry the girl!" would be heard no more.

Thousands of Young Englanders of stall and gallery who more or less came to live with this play during its long run must be asking themselves anxiously if in their absence the audience is as well cast as it used to be. The answer is, I rather doubt it. I thought many of the interruptions half-hearted and poorly timed, the best coming from a small group on the floor of the house led by a leather-lunged young man whose extraordinary word-perfectness made me suspicious—unworthily, I'm sure—of the strictness of his amateur status. I think I am right in saying that no pennies passed over my head en route for the stage, and certainly the new audience is short of the old in the matter of originality. But it will quickly learn, and stiffened by some of the old hands it should reach the splendid standard of the past. In any case I think it is a great mistake to incite the audience to misbehave by a coy prologue urging it to restrain itself; this is as much a pity as the fact that some of the players are now ragging the lines too much. Such conspiracy between the two camps is all against the best tradition of this astounding entertainment, the most hopelessly British and in some ways the biggest jest known to our modern theatre.

I am still unrepentantly of the belief that Mr. WALTER REYNOLDS wrote it with his tongue in his cheek. I have read the script carefully and am convinced that in no other manner could such gems of sticky English as the *Doctor's* first conversation with *Mrs. Ravenscroft* or *Hope's* address to the scouts have been conceived. But he should be a proud man to have maintained the note of his burlesque with such consistency.

Would it not be a good idea to give ringside seats to a party of English-speaking German prisoners, and then send them home, so that they could take away the astonishing news that their murderous and self-righteous captors laughed themselves publicly sick at the altars of Virtue and Patriotism? The poor fellows would be

horribly bewildered, but a few might grasp for the first time for what we are really fighting.

With the reservation I mentioned about ragging, the cast knows its job thoroughly. If my memory is correct there are only three notable changes: *Jabez Hawk Junior*, whom Mr. WALTER WADE plays without Mr. GUY MIDDLETON's superb caddishness but with a pretty vulgarity which serves nearly as well; *Hope Ravenscroft*, excellently taken by Mr. ALLAN CHADWICK; and *Lady Mary*, to whom Miss WYN CLARE gives a little too much charm and vivacity and not quite enough of the icy whalebone of the Dukeries. Mr. JOHN OXFORD's *Hawk Senior* remains a model of municipal corruption, from which even the most experienced mayors can learn something. Whether it is true that they are allowed in at half-price as students I cannot say.

It doesn't matter much that the Union Jack in the final scene is all wrong, nor that the *Doctor*, though a captain, has only a single star on his shoulder, nor that he omits to wear the V.C. he so bravely earned. But I present these missiles to the audience.

ERIC.

## War News Without Tears

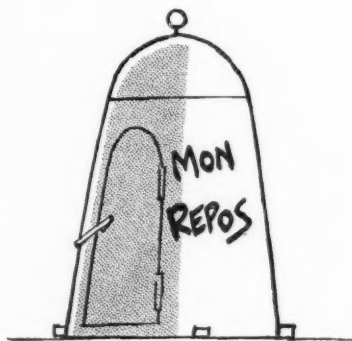
MRS. SHARPE came in to see my aunt just before six the other evening.

"Oh," she said, "I had to let you know at once, as it is about Mrs. Chitfield's funeral, and I am told you knew her."

"Yes," replied my aunt, "but it was about thirty-five years ago. She was buried yesterday, I hear."

"Quite right," said Mrs. Sharpe, nodding her head vigorously; "that is why I came in. It is really extraordinary."

"What is?"



"Well, you know Mr. Lintott, who used to be curate down here, don't you?"

"I knew him very well then," said my aunt.

"Yes; well, he went to be rector of Ranston, if you remember, but he left there for Bettelham three years ago—it was a bigger parish."

"Yes, I knew that."

"Well," pursued Mrs. Sharpe, "it appears that a certain Mr. Clasp was schoolmaster at Ranston in Mr. Lintott's time—in fact he still is, but what Mr. Lintott did not know was that he had been evacuated with all his boys to—where do you think?—to Deach-on-Sea!"

"Why should he have known that?" asked my aunt.

"Well, he knew him very well at Ranston: but the point is of course that Mrs. Chitfield was buried at Deach-on-Sea yesterday."

"Did Mr. Clasp know Mrs. Chitfield?" asked my aunt, feeling rather puzzled.

"No! How should he? But Mr. Lintott did."

"Oh, I see. You mean he went to the funeral?"

"No, he couldn't get away unfortunately," said Mrs. Sharpe, "but his brother George went."

"Whose brother?"

"Mr. Lintott's — George Lintott. And the extraordinary thing is that he met him at lunch!"

"Met who?"

"Why, Mr. Clasp of course; and Mr. Clasp was actually being sent back to Ranston with all his boys on that very day. In fact his train left Deach at the same time as the funeral began."

"I suppose George Lintott knew this Mr. Clasp too?" put in my aunt.

"No, never set eyes on him before," said Mrs. Sharpe, "but still he was able to motor him to Deach station and get back in time for the funeral."

"Well," said my aunt, after a pause, "it's very kind of you, Mrs. Sharpe, to have taken so much trouble to let me know all this."

"Oh, you knew Mrs. Chitfield and Mr. Lintott, so I knew you would be interested; but what we of course are all wondering is what Mr. Lintott will say when he hears that his own brother went to Mrs. Chitfield's funeral and took Mr. Clasp to the station on the same day and at the same place."

Saying this, Mrs. Sharpe got up. "I'll let you know what he says," she concluded as she shook hands.

As soon as she had gone my aunt turned the wireless on.

"That's the end of the News," said the announcer.



"What I want is activity—damme! when I'm at war I am at war!"

### Slosh Me!

ALMOST every Briton must have heard a conversation like this:

A (*fiercely*). Say that again!

B (*innocent*). Say what?

A. Say what yer said just now!

B. What did I say?

A. You know.

B. Well, what of it?

A (*trenchant*). Yer wouldn't say it again, would yer?

B (*defiant*). 'Course I would!

A. Before witnesses?

B. Why not? What's the matter with yer?

A. Say it in court, would yer?

B. Say it anywhere. Why not?

A. 'Cos I'd slosh yer, see?

B. Oh, you would, would yer?

A. Yes, I would.

B. Go on, then.

A. Go on, what?

B. Slosh me.

A. You ain't said it yet.

B. Said what?

A. Said what yer said.

B. Thought yer said I 'ad said it.

A. Say it again, I said.

B. Wouldn't like it if I did, would yer?

A. What d'yer mean?

B. Before witnesses?

A. What do I care? They'd know it was a dirty lie.

B. They'd know it was true, to look at yer.

A. Say it, then.

B. Please yerself—You ought to leave young Alice alone. (*Defiant*) Now, then.

A. That ain't what yer said.

B. What was it, then?

A. You know.

B. You know more than I do. seems to me.

A. Go on.

B. Say it yerself.

A. Yer daren't, because yer know I'll slosh yer.

B. Yer daren't, because yer know it's true.

Neighbour. Oy! Chuck it, you two!

A (*indignant*). Well, who begun it?

B. You did. You said you'd slosh me.

A. So I will slosh yer, if yer don't mind yer step.

B. Slosh away, then. I wouldn't notice it.

A. You wait. I got a 'orse-whip at home.

B. That all?

A. No, it ain't. I got a iron bar.

B. You've got a sauce, I know that.

A. Say that again!

B. Say what? [*Da capo*.]

\* \* \* \* \*

And almost every Briton must have detected the counterpart of this dialogue in the course of the war—to date. But of course we must all touch wood.

A. P. H.



"Well, boys, I just got away from civilisation in time."

### Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### Prius Dementat

A SHORTAGE of iron-ore, petrol and rubber, a railway system worn so near to exhaustion that a chance bomb in an engine-shed might immobilise a province, a growing dearth of foodstuffs and an exchequer nearing bankruptcy—these are only some of the material difficulties our enemies have to face, and their personal and moral tragedy is infinitely worse. In *Nazi Germany Can't Win* (LINDSAY DRUMMOND, 10/6) Dr. WILHELM NECKER unravels the tangle of lying promises, contradictory claims, threats and blandishments by which Herr HITLER and his band have sought strategically to isolate their intended victims as a prelude to their destruction. To-day an end has been set even to this resource, for such international ribaldry no longer hoodwinks any foreign State, and Germany herself is seen to be awakening. Her ablest thinkers are herded in torture camps or, scattered abroad, are working for the fall of Nazidom; the army is purged of its best soldiers; the Church prefers martyrdom to submission; and the secret police must be reinforced by positive armies of occupation if gathering discontent is to stop short of open revolt. Finally, an organisation which smothers that free flow of ideas and united will-power that is the strength of democracy is focused in a leader drugged with his own imaginings and deaf to any voice not servile to every frantic gesture.

Dr. NECKER piles up the total to a stern account in a manner that is cold, considered, statistical, almost impartial, but with furious heat below. We have our own difficulties—what have we to compare with these?

#### The New Emil

Nothing becomes Mr. HENRY WILLIAMSON's new book like its end; and nothing could promise, one imagines, a braver sequel to a family record amazingly blended of the fine, the squalid, the sound and the perverse. *The Children of Shallowford* (FABER AND FABER, 8/6) are the children of a man who, having diagnosed the last war as the product of mass-produced minds and a chaotic and selfish financial system, determines that his own offspring shall steer clear of the education that results in the one because it is founded on the other. So here you have *Windles, John, Margaret, Robbie and Rikky* in a Devon cottage with a harassed father and an admirable well-poised mother engaged in imitating father—sometimes rather disastrously—for want of something better to look up to. An outsider might note the poverty of family life without the supernatural background which is so particularly necessary for solitaires, and compare the menage of this man of letters with the household, say, of Sir THOMAS MORE. But seeing how many wrong turnings education has taken since MORE's day, parents with the courage to go back may well be pardoned for going back a thought too far.

#### Her Majesty of Holland

The royal family of Holland is interesting for several reasons, among others that the Queen has been longer on the throne than any other European monarch, and that not only was the Regent during her minority a woman, but a daughter and granddaughter are the next in succession. The development of QUEEN WILHELMINA's character as shown, perhaps unintentionally, in *The Royal Ladies of the Netherlands* (STANLEY PAUL, 12/6) is very interesting too. One fancies that in younger days she must have been a little self-assertive and obstinate, but the self-assertion has become determination and the obstinacy courage. As we know, she has never hesitated all her reign long to perform







#### UNRECORDED SCENES FROM THE HISTORY OF THE WAR

PUBLIC SPEAKERS ATTEND A CLASS FOR THE PURPOSE OF LEARNING TO PRONOUNCE CORRECTLY THE PHRASE: "WE SHALL NOT SHEATHE THE SWORD UNTIL, ETC., ETC."

George Morrow, November 25th, 1914

any task, however hard, which she thought her duty. Such people are sometimes a little austere, and it is pleasant to learn that Her Majesty delights in the high spirits of her son-in-law, Prince BERNHARD, though it is well-nigh impossible to imagine her taking life lightly herself. Mr. L. J. POWER has used some rather odd expressions in this book of his, and it is rather too full of processions, funeral in the beginning and rejoicing in the end, but he convinces his readers that Holland both has been and will be fortunate in her rulers.

#### The Last of England

So threatened is the countryside by urban domination—"God help the countryman if ever the land should be

nationalised, as it is half-way already!"—that all the Cobbetts of our day can do is to record industrial erosion wave by wave and make what stand they can for such bastions of rusticity as remain. This is the two-fold task of *The Sweet of the Year* (CHAPMAN AND HALL, 7/6). It is a threnody for departed use and beauty, "that faithful pair"; and a celebration of what yet remains to comfort the sad hearts of such lovers of English England as Mr. H. J. MASSINGHAM. His reflections and experiences over a few spring months, and an orbit from Gloucestershire to South Oxon, enshrine such tragedies as the felling of Guiting Great Wood by Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and such heartening encounters as those with the hedgers, thatchers, chair-makers and dry-wallers whose self-sufficing crafts are still part and parcel of true rural

husbandry. Perhaps, as "G. K. C." once said, we shall yet put the clock back, seeing that it is wrong. And here is a book that should remind us, among other things, what a man's time is made for.

### Jackdaw

MR. GERALD BULLETT's five-fold anthology of prose and verse, *The Jackdaw's Nest* (MACMILLAN, 10/6), is a compilation of nearly a thousand pages. His choice ranges from the Bhagavad-Gita to P. G. WODEHOUSE (not one of his best) and in length from a couple of lines to forty pages. That imp JANE AUSTEN appears pleasantly, and SYDNEY SMITH is well represented. BACON is poorly treated; with his concentration and brevity he should be given in the piece, not in cuttings. Both in prose and verse, especially the latter, some great names are omitted; this presumably is due to Mr. BULLETT's intentional avoidance of what is, or should be, already well known. It is all a matter of opinion, but he leaves out "Sohrab and Rustum" on the grounds of familiarity, and includes a gorgeous extract from *Paradise Lost* that might better justify that assumption. But queerest of all is his ignoring of KIPLING and, above all, CHESTERTON. Granting that the central idea of the book is tranquillity (though one hardly sees "P. G." there), for a double collection like this those two should offer rich and abundant meat to any anthologist.

### Picaresque Priestley

Let the People Sing (HEINEMANN, 8/6) has already a familiar sound, portions of it having been broadcast for our entertainment at intervals during the last few weeks. And it should go at least as well as most of Mr. PRIESTLEY's novels. For this able author has grasped one of the great principles of success in fiction—that of the vital importance of the Amiable Eccentric. Here we have at least four, if not five, two of whom meet almost at once. *Timmy Tiverton* is a short and stoutish comedian, out of a job; *Professor Ernst Kronak*, tall and bearded, is a Czech refugee from Prague; and they meet crouching in a luggage van, because both of them are trying to hide from the police. Not of course that they have done anything wrong, but merely because this sort of opening starts a picaresque novel nicely on a comic note. The *Professor* has a letter of

introduction to The Manor, Chilham Moss, and thither the pair proceed to be welcomed by our third eccentric, no less a man than *Sir George Denberry-Baxter*, ex-Colonial Governor, who has two distinct personalities—very fierce when sober and most amiable (and musically inclined) when thoroughly plastered, as on the evening of their visit. In the morning, however, things are different, and the two set out again to meet *Mr. Hassock*, travelling auctioneer, and his charming assistant, who have hired the Little Market Hall at Dunbury town, where he intends to start business with a musical entertainment. How the Town

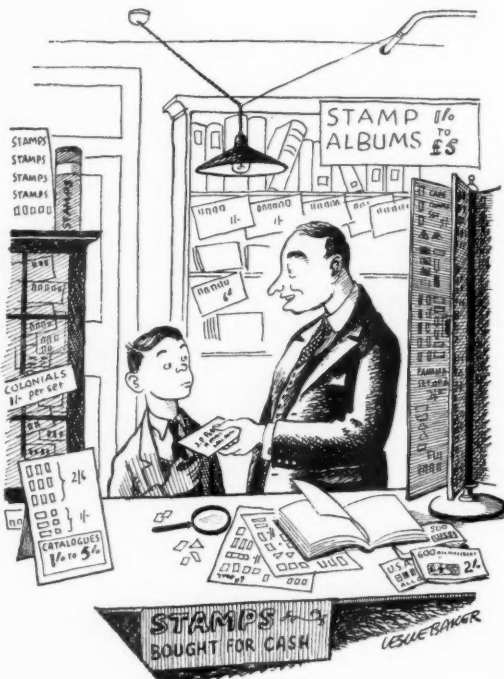
Council, prompted by *Lady Foxfield* and her satellites, attempted to stop this and how they were ultimately defeated—largely through the help of *Sir George*, carefully prepared for the occasion—is the main theme of the book, which has, moreover, a couple of love-affairs thrown in for good measure.

### Fame's Penalties

MR. MICHAEL INNES, with three excellent novels already to his credit, is firmly established in the top class of detective-story-tellers, and now no apology is needed for recommending *Stop Press* (GOLLANCZ, 8/6), a tale in which a popular novelist's imagination begins to work overtime, to those who usually avoid this type of fiction. In a story of almost unlimited scope and variety side-shows, so to speak, abound, but although their organiser is at times in danger of being swamped by his verbosity (he says that one of his characters indulged in a "wallow" of words) he never begins to lose control of his main theme, and he has found a sound and tidy conclusion for his

elaborately-developed yarn. Once again Mr. INNES makes free use of his satirical gifts, and even the dons of Oxford must needs smile over some of the shafts aimed at them.

"PONT'S" second book of collected drawings from *Punch* has appeared. *The British at Home* (COLLINS, 5/-) contains several more traits in "the British character" as well as the well-remembered but perennially funny "At Home" series, and all those little drawings in which domestic troubles are suggested with such disconcerting brilliance. And there is an Appreciation by T. H. WHITE, who points out the full richness of the Master's work to those who might forget to examine the detail of the pictures.



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